

FORREST, NATHAN BEDFORD

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# Civil War Officers Confederate

Nathan Bedford Forrest

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

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both divine and human—in ways very much relevant today, and sometimes, with luck and good faith, rediscovering it in unexpected places,” Coates wrote.

**Nathan Bedford Forrest: A Biography**, by Jack Hurst (Vintage, \$15).

Nathan Bedford Forrest was the Southerner whom Northerners (and some Southerners) loved to hate. The only other Civil War participant to garner such antipathy in enemy territory was Union Gen. William T. Sherman, and Sherman himself once characterized Forrest as the “most remarkable man our Civil War produced on either side,” as well as “a devil ... who should be hunted down and killed if it costs 10,000 lives and bankrupts the treasury.”

Brutal from his beginnings as the uneducated son of an impoverished Tennessee blacksmith, Forrest made his pre-war fortune as a notorious slave trader and his Civil War legend as a fierce warrior who charged headlong into battle.

His tactical genius became tarnished by his lack of mercy in victory. Forrest had been known to continue shelling defenseless Union troops after they had unfurled the white flag of surrender, and he presided over the notorious massacre at Ft. Pillow.

“After reading Hurst’s lively accounts of Shiloh, Brice’s

Cross Roads and innumerable cavalry raids, we comprehend why Forrest became the only soldier of the war to rise from private to major general,” reviewer Harold Holzer wrote in the Tribune last year.

“To be sure, Forrest is a vexing subject ... [but] Hurst has used original sources creatively to forge the most complete and complex portrait yet of this Civil War Jekyll and Hyde.”

**Mama Makes Up Her Mind and Other Dangers of Southern Living**, by Bailey White (Vintage, \$10).

In “Mama Makes Up Her Mind,” storyteller Bailey White reveals the odd Georgia hamlet of her hometown, full of fascinating neighbors, overstuffed homes, alligators and Mama. Old, frail and genteel to outsiders, Mama can be dangerous when she makes up her mind. Hang around and she just might take you to Rosey’s, a Florida juke joint so raunchy it scared away Ernest Hemingway.

“You’ll learn, after devouring about a half-dozen of these vignettes, that the only consistent thing about Mama is her unpredictability,” reviewer Joyce R. Slater wrote in the Tribune last year. And when you’re finished, “you’ll hope that Bailey White never runs out of stories and that Mama lives forever and never goes anywhere near a therapist.”

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